

The South End Revitalization Project

2-23-2009

Project Area Description

The South End neighborhood of Springfield is located just south of downtown along Main Street with State Street to the North and Mill Street to the South. It is the Southern gateway to the City from Interstate 91. It is a small urban neighborhood made predominantly of single and two-family houses. There are a series of retail storefronts along Main Street which include some of the City's best known local restaurants and shops.

A sub-district in this neighborhood is called Hollywood. Within this district, there are twenty-four (24) historic, four-story masonry buildings built between 1913 and 1927. These currently operate using project-based Section 8 subsidies. Some of these properties have become dilapidated resulting in tax title foreclosure and in some instances even requiring demolition by the City.

The Hollywood district sits adjacent to Emerson Wight Park, established in 1920 to provide recreation to residents in this district. Unfortunately, in recent years, the park has become blighted and abandoned. This is partly because there are no houses or businesses facing the park allowing inappropriate uses to go on unseen. Further, the park is inaccessible to residents from close by neighborhoods due to the lack of nearby parking.

Because of such factors, the Hollywood district has become blighted over the past ten years, and now suffers from crime, residential vacancy, and a disordered public realm that has negatively affected retail on Main Street. Specific physical challenges in this area include uneven circulation and way finding, an unusual number of dead end streets, disconnected streets, and unplanned open spaces created by the required demolition of dilapidated structures.

In 2006, the City of Springfield invited the Urban Land Institute (ULI) to the City to help map an immediate course of action for economic development. This road map touched on residential, commercial and industrial development and made wide-ranging recommendations. The ULI recommendations released in the fall of 2006 identified the South End as its number one priority neighborhood project.

Development of South End Plan and Public Participation

In early 2008, GLC Development Resources prepared a report that studied in detailed the retail and housing market conditions in the South End. A later report released in July 2008, identified a more specific revitalization plan and action agenda for the South End which would improve the quality of life and housing choice for local residents.

The revitalization plan recommendations were refined with the help of a yearlong community process undertaken by the City and group of stakeholders, the South End Revitalization Coalition (see Table 1). The City and the Coalition have been holding Stakeholders meetings since November of 2007 to fashion the consensus plan. Additionally, several community meetings have been held at

the local school, Mt. Carmel Academy, to keep the neighborhood involved and informed on the progress of the project.

As part of the City's effort to keep the community informed and answer residents' questions and concerns, the City created a website for the South End Project (www.Springfield-ma.gov/SouthEndProject - Attachment A). The City staff maintains and updates this website regularly with meeting announcements, agendas, frequently asked questions (see Attachment B), relevant reports, and news about the progress of the project. Additionally, the South End Citizens Council Office has been outfitted with maps and information about the project. Large posters on the office's windows invite residents to come in and get more information about the project.

From the work and interactions with the Stakeholders and the South End community, the City has shaped the South End Revitalization Initiative. The Initiative is a series of connected public and private initiatives designed to systematically improve the condition of housing, open space, infrastructure and retail in the South End. The South End Revitalization Initiative is composed of ten components, which to be successful, need to be implemented in a coordinated manner. These components are:

1. Main Street Improvements
2. Dwight Street Extension Improvements
3. Improvements to Hollywood Buildings
4. Replacement of Springfield Housing Authority Apartments on Marble Street
5. Connection of Ashmun and Marble Streets
6. Improvements to Emerson Wight Park
7. Dwight Street Extension connection to Wendell Place and Rutledge Avenue
8. Creation of new retail opportunities along Main Street
9. Redevelopment of the Gemini Site
10. Redevelopment of Arlington Court

Table 1: South End Revitalization Coalition - Active Participants and Represented Organizations

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Tony	Calabrese	AC Produce
Jeff	Ciuffreda	Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield
Alex & Yasmin	Cortes	Appliance Plus Flowers and Gifts
Lucy	Peterson	Balboni Associates
Jeb	Balise	Balise Motor Sales
Jim	Demas	Balise Motor Sales
Steven	Bradley	Baystate Health System
James	Pace	Bear Auto
Allan A.	Ardito	Boston Sea Foods Inc.
Fran	Cataldo	C & W Realty Co
Anne	Awad	Caring Health Center
Russ	Denver	Chamber of Commerce
Gilberto	Nieves	Citizens Bank Main St.

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
David	Dudley	Dave's Furniture
Tony	Diaz	Diaz Market
Gordon	Pulsifer	First Resource Companies
Frank	Forastiere	Forastiere Funeral Home
Joe	Frigo	Frigo's
Hector	Toledo	Hampden Bank
Peter	Gagliardi	Housing Alliance Partnership, Inc.
James	Langone	James A. Langone Photographer, Inc.
Leo & Anna	Daniele	La Florentina Pastry Shop
Frank	Langone	Langone's Florist
Bob	Kaye	Mass Development
Dan	Keenan	Mercy Medical Center
Vince	McCorkle	Mercy Medical Center
Rico	Daniele	Mom & Rico's Specialty Market/ S.E. Resident
John	Doleva	Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame
Sandy	Orr	Orr Cadillac
Paul	Philbin	Philbin Associates
Robert	Bolduc	Pres, Pride
Tony	Caputo	Red Rose Restaurant/ S.E. Resident
Peter	Pappas	River's Landing Bar & Restaurant
Evan	Plotkin	Samuel D. Plotkin and Associates, Inc
Edward	Grimaldi	Samuel's Tavern
Paul	Picknelly	Sheraton Springfield
Daniel F.	Walsh	Sheraton Springfield
Leo A.	Florian	South End Citizens Council/ S.E. Resident
Angelina	Florian	South End Resident/ City Neighborhood Staff
Tania	Barber	South End Resident
David	Appleman	South End Resident
Leo	Ballou	South End Resident
Carmino	Bonavita	South End Resident
Debra	Katz	South End Resident
Edward	Maddaloni	South End Resident
Peter	Serafino	South End Resident
Siobhan	Spruill	South End Resident
William H.	Abrashkin	Springfield Housing Authority
Deputy Chief William	Cochrane	Springfield Police Department
John	Lynch	Springfield Police Department
Joan	Kagan	Square One Inc.
Michele	Johnson	Starbucks Coffee Company
Peter	Zorzi	Studio One Inc./ S.E. Resident

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Greg	Zorzi	Studio One Inc./ S.E. Resident
Joe	Pasternak	Tazzini Funeral Home
Christine	Tazzini	Tazzini Funeral Home
Frank	Colaccino	The Colvest Group LTD.
Paul	Oldenburg	Valley Real Estate
Jeff	Oldenburg	Valley Real Estate